



PUBLIC AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY  
601 NORTH FAIRFAX STREET  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314-2007



MAY 14 2008

## DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY

### OPERATING INSTRUCTION

OPERATING INSTRUCTION NO. DMA OI 10-01

SUBJECT: Merit Staffing

References: (a) Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 330, 334, and 335  
(b) DoD 1400.20-1-M, "DoD Program for Stability of Civilian employment Policies, Procedures and Programs Manual," September 1990

#### 1. PURPOSE

This Instruction establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and prescribes procedures for the selection of employees through the merit staffing process.

#### 2. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

##### 2.1. This Instruction:

2.1.1. Applies to all positions in NSPS pay band 03 and below, in grades GS-15 and below, and wage grade positions that require a competitive selection as defined in reference (b). This includes all positions in the competitive service filled by:

2.1.1.1. Competitive promotion.

2.1.1.2. Temporary promotion for more than 120 days.

2.1.1.3. Transfer to a higher grade or pay band.

2.1.1.4. Detail for more than 120 days to a higher grade or pay band.

2.1.1.5. Reinstatement to a grade higher than previously permanently held in the competitive service.

2.1.1.6. Reassignment, transfer or demotion to a position with more promotion potential than a position previously permanently held.



2.1.1.7. Selection for training programs that are required before an employee may be considered for promotion, such as a formal intern program or an upward mobility program.

2.1.2. Does not apply to:

2.1.2.1. Senior Executive Service positions.

2.1.2.2. Excepted Service positions.

2.1.2.3. Bargaining unit positions that are subjected to the provisions of a negotiated agreement.

2.1.2.4. Promotions resulting from an upgrade in the position without significant change in duties and responsibilities as a result of a classification decision.

2.1.2.5. A position change permitted by reduction-in-force and Priority Placement Program procedures.

2.1.2.6. Promotion to full performance level when the promotion potential was made known in the original vacancy announcement.

2.1.2.7. Promotion or detail to a higher grade or pay band position for 120 days or less.

2.1.2.8. Re-promotion to a grade or pay band previously permanently held.

2.1.2.9. Movement to a position with promotion potential no greater than that previously permanently held.

2.1.2.10. Consideration of candidates not considered properly in a previous competition.

### 3. POLICY

3.1. Positions covered by this Instruction shall be filled from among the best qualified available candidates.

3.2. Merit selections will be made without regard to political, religious, or labor organization affiliation or non-affiliation, marital status, race, color, sex, national origin, non-disqualifying disability, or age.

3.3. Evaluation of candidates shall be based solely on job-related criteria that relate to successful performance in the position to be filled. Due weight may be given to performance appraisals and awards.



3.4. All aspects of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and DoD priority placement requirements shall be followed, including but not limited to OPM Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan for Displaced Employees as required by 5 CFR 330 (reference (a), and DoD Program for Stability of Civilian Employment (reference (b))).

3.5. Adequate records shall be maintained to allow reconstruction of selection to provide necessary information as required by Part 335 of reference (a).

#### 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1. The Director, Defense Logistics Agency Human Resources Center – DoD (DHRC-D) provides civilian personnel services support to the Defense Media Activity (DMA) based upon an Memorandum of Agreement and Service Level Agreement between the Director, DMA and the Director, DHRC-D. Under this agreement, the Director, DHRC-D shall:

4.1.1. Implement the merit selection program.

4.1.2. Ensure appropriate records are maintained to document the selection process.

4.1.3. Ensure notification of OPM when recruitment includes candidates from outside of DMA.

4.1.4. Advise and assist DMA officials in meeting their merit selection responsibilities.

4.1.5. Ensure that all legal requirements are met before making final job offers.

4.2. The DMA Human Capital Management Officer, shall:

4.2.1. Establish supplemental internal operating procedures as may be required to implement this Instruction.

4.2.2. Coordinate and communicate with the Director, DHRC-D and with DMA management and supervisory officials to ensure full understanding of and compliance with the intent and purposes of this Instruction by all parties involved in merit selection actions.

4.2.3. Approve exceptions to the area of consideration guidelines in paragraph 5.2., below, consistent with subparagraph 5.2.3.

4.3. The Selecting Official shall:

4.3.1. Support the merit selection process by adhering to the policies and procedures in this Instruction.

4.3.2. Develop an evaluation plan for each selection based on job-related criteria.

4.3.3. Ensure appropriate consideration of employees absent for legitimate reason, such as detail, leave, military training, military service, serving in public international organizations, or on Intergovernmental Personnel Act assignments, as required by 5 CFR 334 (reference (a)).

4.4. Job Applicants shall apply for merit selection opportunities in accordance with the requirements and timelines in the vacancy announcement.

## 5. PROCEDURES

5.1. The DLA Automated Staffing Program (ASP) will be used for all merit selection actions subject to this Instruction.

5.2. Area of Consideration shall be set broadly enough to obtain a sufficient number of well-qualified applicants.

5.2.1. The broadest practical area of consideration is encouraged whenever practical; however, in no case shall the area of consideration be narrower than the following:

5.2.1.1. DoD wide for Pay Band 03 or GS-14/15 positions.

5.2.1.2. DMA wide for supervisory/managerial Pay Band 03 or GS-13/14 positions.

5.2.1.3. DMA location-wide for non-supervisory/non-managerial Pay Band 02 or GS-9 through GS-13 positions, Pay Band 01 or GS-5 through GS-8 and Wage Leader positions. For these purposes, location-wide is defined as all DMA sub-units located within the local commuting area of the position being filled.

5.2.1.4. DMA local sub-unit for all other GS and Wage Grade positions.

5.2.2. Disabled veterans with a certified disability of thirty (30) percent or greater and individuals who are severely disabled shall be considered for all jobs.

5.2.3. Except for Critical Acquisition Positions, the area of consideration may be narrowed due to extenuating circumstances within the employing component; such as realignment or downsizing, subject to approval by the DMA Human Capital Management Officer. When the area of consideration is narrowed, the reason(s) for this action and the approval of the DMA Human Capital Management Officer shall be documented in the merit selection case file.

5.2.4. The full performance level of a position shall be used when applying the minimum area of consideration criteria.

5.2.5. When the area of consideration includes applicants from outside of the DoD, applicants eligible under the Veterans Employment Opportunity Act and the Veterans Readjustment Act must be included in the area of consideration and evaluated under competitive referral procedures.



5.3. Job opportunity announcements shall remain open for a period long enough to attract the attention of potential candidates within the area of consideration. However, in no case shall this period be less than five (5) workdays.

5.4. Applications must be completed and filed in accordance with the procedures published in the Employment section of the DLA Human Resources website, at: <http://www.hr.dla.mil.prospective/howtoapply>. To receive consideration, all required application materials must be completed and received by the closing or cut-off date specified in the job announcement.

5.5. A job analysis shall be completed before initiating the recruitment process.

5.5.1. All skills that are essential for successful performance in the position shall be identified through a job analysis conducted jointly by the human resources specialist and the cognizant manager/selecting official and/or a subject matter expert.

5.5.2. The job analysis documentation shall become part of the merit selection case file.

5.5.3. The skills identified in the job analysis may be prioritized or adjusted after the position have been advertised only if necessary to reduce the number of referred applicants to a manageable number.

5.6. Applicants will be evaluated as follows:

5.6.1. The resume of each applicant will be rated using ASP to compare the applicant's skills to the required and desired skills of the position being filled.

5.6.2. The DHRC-D will review the resumes within the range of referral to verify basic eligibility. If necessary, a subject matter expert will be consulted in the process.

5.6.3. Evaluation methods used in the merit staffing process will be based on the job analysis.

5.6.4. Information concerning the skills each applicant possesses shall be obtained from the applicant's resume. In some cases, the solicitation may require the applicant's resume to include sample work products to evaluate specific skills. Additional documents and/or attachments not specifically announced in the solicitation will neither be required nor accepted for consideration in this process.

5.6.5. Applicants who are current Federal civil service employees must have a performance rating of at least the Fully Successful level or Fair Level of Performance under the NSPS to be eligible for consideration. In addition they must meet the basic eligibility requirements, such as time after competitive appointment and other qualifications requirements by the closing or cut-off date specified in the job announcement. If the announcement is issued

in anticipation of future vacancies, applicants must meet the eligibility criteria by the date the recruit action is filed with the DHRC-D.

5.7. The referral list will be established as follows:

5.7.1. Applicants must meet the basic eligibility requirements to receive referral consideration.

5.7.2. Those qualified applicants with the highest number skills matching the required and desired skills identified for the position being filled will be designated as highly qualified applicants.

5.7.3. For NSPS and GS positions, ten (10) highly qualified applicants with the highest scores normally will be referred to the selecting official for consideration. However, that number may be expanded at the request of the selecting official, provided there is justification for doing so. Fewer may be referred if there are less than ten highly qualified applicants.

5.7.4. If there is a scoring tie that results in more than ten (10) NSPS/GS applicants qualifying for referral, all applicants with scores that tie in the tenth place will be added to the referral list. A tiebreaker will not be used.

5.7.5. The referral list for wage grade positions will include the top twenty (20) applicants.

5.7.6. If there is a scoring tie that results in more than twenty (20) wage grade applicants qualifying for referral, all applicants with scores that tie in the twentieth place will be added to the referral list. A tiebreaker will not be used.

5.7.7. For multiple vacancies, one additional name may be added for each additional vacancy. If this creates a tie, all applicants with that tied score will be added to the referral list.

5.7.8. If a position may be filled at more than one NSPS pay band or GS grade level, it will be treated as if there is more than one vacancy and the selecting official will be provided a referral list for each NSPS pay band or GS grade level.

5.8. Selecting officials are encouraged to conduct interviews.

5.8.1. The selecting official may use discretion in determining which and how many applicants to interview; however, the decision to interview/not interview must be merit based and equitably applied, and justified by the selecting official.

5.8.2. Interview questions shall be based on selection factors and job-related criteria and shall not include questions of a private, personal nature. In addition, when more than one candidate is interviewed for a position, care should be taken to base all of the interviews on a common set of questions.



5.8.3. Written documentation of the interviews is not required. However, if challenged, selecting officials are responsible for justifying their interview process and the resulting judgments. Accordingly, contemporaneous notes are advised.

5.9. Selecting officials may select any of the applicants from the referral list or another candidate who is eligible for noncompetitive consideration.

5.9.1. All selections shall be based on merit factors and job-related criteria. Selection officials may also consider incentive awards, recognitions and performance appraisals.

5.9.2. The selecting official is responsible for justifying the selection, if challenged. Written reasons for selection are required whenever a position is underrepresented for a particular group, one or more members of that group are referred, and a non-underrepresented candidate is selected.

5.9.3. Selections are tentative until DHRC-D verifies that all requirements have been met.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kay Charles", with a stylized, cursive script.

Kay Charles, Director  
Administration and Management  
Office of the Assistant Secretary of  
Defense for Public Affairs